

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUB #0714 3342129
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 302129Z NOV 09
FM USINT HAVANA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4952
INFO RHMFIU/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS HAVANA 000714

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CAA
DEPT PASS TO NSC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SMIG](#) [CASC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: MINREX RESPONDS POSITIVELY ON POSADA CARRILES TESTIMONY; OTHER ISSUES REMAIN PENDING

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: At the request of the Ministry of External Relations (MINREX), Chief of Mission Farrar met with Josefina Vidal Ferreriro, director of Cuba's North America Office on November 30 to receive word of the approval of two Cuban nationals asked to testify in the federal criminal case of Luis Posada Carriles. When pressed by COM Farrar for responses to other USINT requests, Vidal said that answers to other requests are not yet available. Vidal took this opportunity to reiterate Cuban government cooperation on previous requests, but then highlighted the Government of Cuba's (GOC) position on the "Repatriation Process" for several imprisoned Cuban-Americans. Additionally, Vidal reaffirmed Cuba's commitment to host the next round of talks in the Migration Accords and asked COM Farrar to follow-up on the GOC's proposed dates of February 19 - 20. END SUMMARY

Cuban Government to Facilitate Posada Testimony

¶2. (SBU) Vidal began the November 30 meeting by presenting a diplomatic note to COM Farrar stating that the Cuban government has agreed to send LTC Roberto Hernandez Caballero from the Department of State Security and another witness to the United States to testify in the federal criminal trial of Luis Posada Carriles. LTC Hernandez served as the principal investigator in the 4 September 1997 bombing at the Copacabana Hotel and is prepared to testify on the physical evidence collected after the bombing. LTC Hernandez has previously testified in U.S. federal court on an unrelated criminal matter. The GOC also approved travel of Mr. Nicolas Rodriguez Valdez who was a bartender at the hotel restaurant during the 1997 bombing and was an eyewitness to the alleged plot. Vidal emphasized the Cuban government also will make all physical evidence available in order to assist with the trial. Vidal asked COM Farrar to respond with proposed dates for our requested travel to Cuba of Department of Justice (DOJ) and law enforcement representatives to prepare of the trial.

No News on Other USINT Requests

¶3. (SBU) When asked by COM Farrar if MINREX could provide answers on other outstanding USINT requests, Vidal responded that no other answers are available but indicated that the pending visa request for A/OPR/OS Bill Scotti is likely to be approved. As an example of how the Cuban government has cooperated with USINT requests, Vidal cited the recent approval of the four teams of Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) agents who will come to Cuba to assist in Post's DSS programs.

¶4. (SBU) Vidal highlighted the GOC's November 27 response to

our diplomatic note requesting clarification of the GOC's "Repatriation Process" for several dual nationals imprisoned in Cuba and seeking early release. COM Farrar noted that the GOC's diplomatic note varied with his understanding that the prisoners involved seek to return to the United States rather than remain in Cuba. COMMENT: Consul General Mezlow will request a meeting with her MINREX counterparts to clarify this issue.

Second Round of Migration Talks

¶15. (SBU) Vidal reaffirmed Cuba's commitment to hosting the next round of the U.S. - Cuba bilateral Migration Accord Talks in Havana. Vidal explained that the appropriate Cuban authorities are now not able to attend during the dates proposed by the GOC for January 2010 and asked that COM Farrar respond later to the GOC's most recent proposal of February 19 - 20, 2010.

FARRAR